

Acknowledgments

This book is dedicated to the many individuals working within the world of politics and public service who have helped to make transition planning a professional activity in their areas of responsibility. In so doing, they have strengthened one of the key features of all democratic states: the seamless transition of power from one political leader (or party) to another.

While many people have had a hand in transition planning since public administration was professionalized in the 1960s in Canada, two individuals, in particular, have changed its nature and quality and moved it from an ad hoc activity to a structured and substantial endeavour.

Bill Neville and Jean Pelletier came from different backgrounds and political persuasions but they shared a passion for good government and the value of professionalism over partisanship in the political world.

One could argue that Bill Neville has written the book on transitions. His briefing book for the incoming Conservative government in 1984 is a remarkable political document that contains frank, unvarnished advice to the incoming and inexperienced prime minister. It also demonstrates a profound appreciation of Canadian institutions, especially the value of a professional and non-partisan public service in Canada. Sharing his transition materials with me in 1992 was a generous act from someone who has been a long-standing champion of good government in Canada.

Jean Pelletier became chief of staff to the leader of the opposition in 1991 and, within weeks of his appointment, the political fortunes of Jean Chrétien began to steadily improve. Pelletier was a particularly able

administrator who greatly appreciated the value of planning, meticulous preparation, and steadfast implementation. His steady hand during crises and during the day-to-day operations of government set a standard of professionalism for his colleagues. Although he passed away a few years ago, the memory of his commitment to professionalism lives on.

Both individuals had an important influence on my work. Most important, Bill and Jean taught me that politics can be a noble profession that must be practised with integrity if our system of government is going to be effective.

Patrice Dutil and Wendy Feldman as directors of research at IPAC first proposed that I consider preparing a book on government transitions. Since that time, the IPAC team has been a constant help in the development of this book project and I am grateful for their encouragement and support.

At the University of Ottawa, colleagues Jim Lahey, Greg Fyffe, and Robert Asselin have provided insights and solid advice about the workings of government during our many conversations at O'Dell House around the conference table.

In the course of the past eighteen months, I have been very ably assisted by a number of graduate students in the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs who served as research assistants. Kieran Bergman, Caroline Andison, and Graeme Esau helped with the literature review and read early drafts of some chapters. As has been the case for more than a decade, Susan Snider, a former student of mine with a unique understanding of government organizations, provided much-needed help in organizing the research material.

In the early stages of developing the methodology and framework, I benefited from two roundtables, the first, hosted by James Lahey at the Centre on Public Management in the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Ottawa, and the second session, hosted by David Mitchell at the Public Policy Forum. The insights from the people around the table were very critical in deciding to expand the number of interviews and to ensure a balance between politicians and public servants.

Jackie Jantzen performed an outstanding job transcribing more than five hundred pages of text based on interviews with the key players in transition planning since 1984. As well, Howard Yeung, Kate Layton, and Mary Conway at Deloitte Touche were invaluable in preparing the tables and figures and in editing the text. As well, Joan Harcourt

and Barbara Feldman provided crucial editorial input that helped to shorten a very long draft and sharpen the messaging throughout the manuscript.

Since the book is dependent on archival information, I am very appreciative of the work provided by Maureen Hoogenraad at Library and Archives Canada, who was responsive to my frequent requests for information about transitions planning and who also helped me access the more than twenty boxes of information that I had deposited there more than fifteen years ago.

Jean and Richard Van Loon, Alan Nymark, Joseph McDonald, and James Lahey read early drafts of the manuscript. I am thankful to them for their many comments, since reading early drafts of any book can be a most daunting experience. Their frankness during our feedback sessions helped me refocus the book on many occasions and probably reduced the production time by many months.

Under the direction of Daniel Quinlan at the University of Toronto Press, the two anonymous external reviewers provided a long list of improvements to the manuscript, which added greatly to the overall quality of the finished product.

Given the centrality of the interviews in this project, I am very indebted to the more than forty people who were interviewed for this book project. All of those whom I approached to participate were willing and insightful interviewees. Despite their very busy schedules they were very accommodating in making themselves available for a discussion about transition planning. All of those who were interviewed are listed in [Appendix 9](#), but it is worth noting that Derek Burney, Richard Dicerni, and Michael Wernick agreed to be interviewed a number of times in order to ensure that I had a better understanding of transition planning from their perspectives.

Finally, the conceptualization, data gathering, and writing of this book consumed most of my non-teaching and administrative time at the University of Ottawa from October 2010 until March 2012. In reality, it caused my golf game to suffer unfairly and, more important, it consumed big chunks of family time. Despite this intrusion, my wife, Sheridan Scott, was a constant source of encouragement and she made sure that I had the writing time that I needed to complete this book. As always, I want to thank her for her customary good humour and, most of all, for being there.

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